

Message Text

SECRET

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42

ACTION ARA-20

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S E C R E T JERUSALEM 0048

SECTO 14

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJ: BUNKER LETTER

FOR ARA MOREY BELL FROM BUNKER

1. HERewith APPROVED DRAFT LETTER TO MEMBERS OF HOUSE AND
SENATE. NOTE SENTENCE ADDED AT END OF LETTER.

2. BEGIN QUOTE: UNITED STATES MISSION AT GENEVA
JANUARY , 1974F

DEAR ,

HAD SECRETARY KISSINGER NOT ASKED THAT I ASSUME
RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATION IN ADDITION
TO THE NEGOTIATION WITH PANAMA, I WOULD BE SEEKING TO IMPOSE
ONCE AGAIN UPON YOUR TIME TO REPORT TO YOU ON THE RESULTS OF
MY FIRST AND SECOND VISIT TO PANAMA, NOVEMBER 28 - DECEMBER 3
AND JANUARY 6-8. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, HOWEVER, I HOPE YOU
WILL EXCUSE MY WRITING FROM GENEVA TO YOU CONCERNING THE
PROGRESS OF THE PANAMA NEGOTIATION AND THE FUTURE OF THE
CANAL ITSELF. I AM ALSO WRITING TO OTHER MEMBERS OF BOTH
HOUSES WHO SHARE YOUR SPECIAL INTEREST IN THIS SUBJECT.

THE EXPLORATORY TALKS WITH THE PANAMANIANs WERE
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PRODUCTIVE. AS THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND I EXAMINED THE BASIC

PRINCIPLES WHICH MIGHT UNDERLIE A FUTURE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES RESPECTING THE PANAMA CANAL, I FOUND SOME OF THE PAST DISPARITIES OF VIEW TO HAVE DIMINISHED. I SENSE NOW THAT THERE MAY BE SUFFICIENT COMMON GROUND ON WHICH TO CONSTRUCT A NEW AND MODERN TREATY RELATIONSHIP WHICH PROTECTS THE CRITICAL INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE WATERWAY YET ALSO MEETS PANAMANIAN ASPIRATIONS.

AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES ON THOSE PRINCIPLES WOULD SERVE ONLY TO PROVIDE THE NEGOTIATORS WITH THE BROAD OUTLINES OF A NEW TREATY RELATIONSHIP. THE DETAILS, MANY OF THEM EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, WOULD BE LEFT FOR THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS, AND A PRINCIPLES AGREEMENT WOULD NOT FORECLOSE THE NEGOTIATION OF ANY RIGHTS ESSENTIAL TO THE UNITED STATES.

I BELIEVE WE ARE CLOSE TO REACHING SUCH AN AGREEMENT ON PRINCIPLES AND MIGHT BE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE IT PUBLICLY IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ACCORDINGLY, I WANTED YOU TO KNOW IN ADVANCE OF THIS PROCEDURE AND TO GIVE YOU SOME APPRECIATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PRINCIPLES.

THE FIRST OF THEM WOULD INCORPORATE WHAT HAS BEEN THE UNITED STATES POSITION SINCE 1964, NAMELY, THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD DEVISE A NEW TREATY TO REPLACE THE 1903 CONVENTION AND THE AMENDMENTS TO IT. ANOTHER WOULD PROVIDE THAT A NEW TREATY RELATING TO THE PRESENT CANAL WOULD HAVE A FIXED TERMINATION DATE. STILL OTHERS WOULD ACCORD TO THE UNITED STATES THE RIGHTS NECESSARY TO OPERATE, MAINTAIN AND DEFEND THE CANAL FOR THE NEW TREATY'S LIFETIME, BUT WOULD ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT THE CANAL OPERATES IN PANAMA'S TERRITORY AND THAT PANAMA SHOULD HAVE A MEASURE OF PARTICIPATION IN ITS OPERATION AND DEFENSE, AS WELL AS AN EQUITABLE SHARE OF THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS DERIVING FROM THE CANAL'S OPERATION. A FINAL PRINCIPLE WOULD EMBRACE A RECOGNITION BY BOTH PARTIES THAT THE EXISTING CANAL MIGHT IN THE FUTURE BECOME INADEQUATE FOR INTERNATIONAL MARITIME TRAFFIC AND REQUIRE SOME FORM OF EXPANSION. PROVISIONS FOR ANY NEW EXPANSION PROJECTS WOULD BE NEGOTIATED AND AGREED UPON IN THE TREATY.

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MY CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PANAMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WERE UNDERTAKEN AFTER CONSULTATIONS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, AND THAT DEPARTMENT HAS CONCURRED IN THE FORMULATION OF THESE PRINCIPLES.

WHILE THE PRINCIPLES REFLECT A COMMONALITY OF VIEW BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA WE HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY

PERCEIVED, THE NEGOTIATIONS THAT WILL FIX THE DETAILS OF THE NEW RELATIONSHIP WILL NOT BE EASY. THAT IS BECAUSE, FOR THE UNITED STATES' PART, THERE ARE CRITICAL INTERESTS AT STAKE. I INTEND TO PROTECT THEM.

ON ONE OF MY PERIODIC RETURNS TO WASHINGTON I HOPE THAT I MAY HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF CALLING ON YOU TO REPORT TO YOU IN PERSON.

WITH MY RESPECTS AND BEST WISHES.

SINCERELY,

ELLSWORTH BUNKER
AMBASSADOR AT LARGE OF THE
UNITED STATES

END QUOTE.

KISSINGER

SECRET

NNN

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